

DISTRICT SCHOOL JOURNAL, OF THE STATE OF NEW-YORK.

Vol. VI. ALBANY, OCTOBER, 1845. No. 7.

COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT.

Abraham Van Vechten has been appointed County Superintendent for Albany in the place of Rufus King, Esq. resigned.

OFFICIAL.

STATE OF NEW-YORK—SECRETARY'S OFFICE.
DEPARTMENT OF COMMON SCHOOLS.

TO COUNTY SUPERINTENDENTS.

The several County Superintendents are directed to forward to the Department an account of the several Teachers' Institutes held in their several counties since January last, specifying the number of pupils, the duration of the session, together with any other material facts. In those counties in which Teachers' Drills have been held, the county officers will furnish similar information. The returns should be made on or before the 20th of November.

N. S. BENTON,
State Supt.

TEACHERS' INSTITUTES.

BROOME COUNTY.

The Institute will open on the 5th October, at Binghamton, and will continue three weeks under the direction of J. Taylor Brodt, county superintendent, who will be assisted by Mrs. E. Willard, Albert D. Wright, Dr. A. Wheeler, Dr. N. S. Davis, E. M. Rollo, principal of the Binghamton Academy, and probably by Prof. Davies.

ORLEANS.

Will open on Tuesday, Oct. 7, in Yates Academy, and continue from two to four weeks, under the direction of J. O. Willsea, county superintendent, and Messrs. Benj. Wilcox, Jr., A. M., Principal of the Academy, William F. Bascom, A. M., and L. Reabens. Lectures from the different teachers on the science of teaching and best method of discipline, will be given through the course—also lectures from scientific gentlemen of the county may be expected on subjects relating to physiology, moral and mental philosophy, &c. &c.

SARATOGA.

The Institute will open at Ballston Spa on the seventh of October, and continue three weeks,

under the supervision of Seabury Allen, county superintendent. The board of instruction will consist of Zalmon Richards, A. M. Principal, Reuben H. Bingham, late graduate of the State Normal School, associate teacher, and such other assistance as the Institute may require. Professors Page and Perkins, of the State Normal School, will be present and lecture to the Institute, which will be a great additional inducement to the attendance of the teachers.

STEEBEN.

The Institute will open on the 13th October, at Bath, and will continue ten or twelve days, under the direction of Alanson S. Phillips, county superintendent. The arrangements have not been completed.

COLUMBIA.

SEMI-ANNUAL SCHOOL CELEBRATIONS.

CHATHAM.

On the 26th of August we commenced our common school celebrations at the Federal Stores in the town of Chatham. The large and excellent school at the four corners, in carriages, left the village and were joined by the school at the centre, and other schools, in all making a procession of some fifteen or twenty vehicles, containing the jewels of Chatham; and proceeded to the Federal Stores, where were a number of schools with their teachers assembled. Soon after, the school at Malden, and the schools from different parts of the town arrived; and "last, though not least," the school from Chatham Street. Thirty-three in one four-horse wagon, with banners, appeared to complete the scene. The exercises were opened with prayer by the Rev. Mr. Regg, and although the church was crowded, and the exercises continued from three to four hours, none appeared impatient, and all were highly gratified, and perfectly satisfied with the examinations. And surprise was frequently expressed by gentlemen in attendance, that children attending a common school could sustain so thorough an examination, and that they were proud of the schools in Chatham. After a recess of ten minutes, able and excellent addresses were delivered to parents and teachers, by the Rev. Mr. Regg and the Rev. Mr. Porter; and after some remarks to the children by the county superintendent, the thanks of the audience were presented to the Rev. gentlemen for their very able and interesting addresses; and a committee of three appointed by the choir, to wait upon them, and request a copy of their addresses for publication.

GHEAT.

On the 27th the schools in the town of Gheat assembled at the church near the Hon. Tobias L. Hogebloom's, and we soon found the place too small, and were obliged to have the aisles occupied, and every "nook and corner" filled with benches and chairs, and many had to stand during the exercises. After prayer by the Rev. Mr. Deyoe, the examination was commenced by reciting, then an exercise in arithmetic, next in grammar, then in geography; concluding with an exercise in

physiology. The exercises were uncommonly interesting, particularly reading; to see children in the presence of thousands, not only reading correctly and understandingly, but beautifully, must have been gratifying, not to teachers alone, but to parents also. And specimens of drawing and painting were exhibited that would have done honor to our State Normal School, and we challenge any school in the State of New-York to present as fine specimens as will be presented at the next State convention of Superintendents at Poughkeepsie, from No. 8 to the town of Ghent. The different schools were examined by their respective teachers, and all appeared highly delighted with the manner in which the examinations were sustained. After a recess of fifteen minutes, during which we were favored with excellent singing by the choir, the Rev. Mr. DeWitt delivered an able and interesting address, and was followed by the Rev. Mr. Porter, of Chatham, in his usual eloquent and happy manner of addressing parents upon the subject of education. The county superintendent then addressed the children, and the exercises were concluded to the entire satisfaction of all present.

HILLSDALE.

On the 30th, the schools in the town of Hillsdale, at an early hour, assembled at the Methodist Church, and formed a procession and marched to the Baptist Church, nearly one-fourth of a mile, preceded by a band of music. The schools had each its appropriate banner and motto, and generally a device. The banners were all well got up and added much to the beauty of the procession. One from No. 9 was peculiarly interesting, bearing for its motto, "Knowledge is Power," and bearing the school-house beautifully painted by one of the pupils. The body of the church had been reserved for the scholars, but it was soon found that the place was too strait for the pupils, and many had to stand, and not one-fourth of the people could enter the church. The aisles, gallery and hall were literally jammed. The windows and doors were opened, and as many as could approach them near enough to hear or see, filled them. Many were in wagons and carriages, eager to catch a glimpse of the scholars. The exercises were opened with prayer by the Rev. Mr. Jones. The first class of each school then ascended the stage created for the purpose in front of the desk, and gave excellent specimens of correct writing; then each school, accompanied by its respective teacher, occupied the stage, and well sustained a critical and thorough examination in grammar, arithmetic and geography, answering alternately and in concert promptly, evincing to the thousands of parents present, that their children had not only been properly taught, but that their teachers were of a high order, and had faithfully discharged the duties of their profession. The exercises were enlivened by music from the choir, and from several schools, proving that the experiment has proved successful, of introducing vocal music into our schools. The schools were briefly examined by the county superintendent, and their answers clearly showed that the scholars understood perfectly what they had been taught. Where all of the exercises were so well sustained, it would be needless to particularize. But the examination in the grammar manifested clearly, to the entire satisfaction of all present that the principles were well understood, appreciated, and applied in analyzing and constructing sentences. After the recess, able and impressive addresses were made by the Rev. Mr. Brewer, and by the Rev. Mr. Fuller, and an address to the children by the county superintendent. And it was truly a delightful and noble scene to see four hundred children marching with music and banners, all delighted and happy, and sustaining a thorough examination, and then returning to their homes, contented and happy, and no accident to mar their felicity. It has been truly and well said, "the last month has been worth more to the schools in the town of Hillsdale than any six months which preceded it."

KINDERHOOK.

The schools in the town of Kinderhook assembled at the Baptist Church on Tuesday, the 21 of September, and being preceded by music, and clergymen representing four different denominations, marched in procession to the Brick Church, attended by their parents and friends, filling that large and beautiful edifice to overflowing. The exercises were opened with prayer, by the Rev. Mr. Smith of Pennsylvania, after which each school went through an exercise in reading; then the pupils of No. 1 sang a short and appropriate piece, entitled "Try Again." Then an exercise in arithmetic

by answering in concert; next singing by the pupils in No. 2. An exercise in grammar followed, then singing by the pupils of No. 3. An exercise in geography closed the examination. The Rev. Dr. Strobel, of Valatie, then addressed the children, after which the Rev. Mr. Shaffer addressed the teachers. The addresses were interesting and appropriate, inculcating sound and wholesome truths, in the practice of which, those for whom they were intended will find their best interests advanced. After some remarks from the county superintendent, expressing his gratification at the result of the examination, the benediction was pronounced by the Rev. Mr. Van Zandt, the assembly dispersed, all well pleased with the celebration. Too much credit cannot be bestowed upon the town superintendents of the towns in which celebrations have been held. They have labored with a zeal and ability truly commendable. The result of our celebrations has been in the highest degree animating and cheering to all engaged and interested in the cause of education, and undoubtedly will give an impulse to our common schools which will be permanent and salutary. An interest has been created never before known, and the schools in Columbia county were never in as flourishing and prosperous a condition as at the present time, affording abundant encouragement to us all to persevere in the course of enlightened humanity, devoted patriotism and practical virtue.

Respectfully yours,

DAVID G. WOODIN,

County Sup't.

FRANCIS DWIGHT, Esq.

ESSEX.

SEMI-ANNUAL EXAMINATION OF THE COMMON SCHOOL TEACHERS AND PUPILS.

Agreeably to the invitation of the Westport Common School Association, the several schools in town, with beautiful banners, portraying a variety of scientific subjects, convened in the church at Wadham's Falls, on the morning of Wednesday, Sept. 3d. The exercises were opened with prayer, by the Rev. Mr. Wood, of Benson, Vt.

The examining committee called for the writing books, having the progressive dates, showing their improvement in penmanship—the maps of Westport and atlases of other geographical maps executed by the pupils—the several letters setting forth the advantages of common school examinations, composed by the teachers, the pupils, or their friends, and copied, folded and directed, by the pupils; and the books of trees, illustrating the principles of grammar.

These specimens, and interesting proofs of efficient industry on the part of teachers and pupils, were passed for the examination of the audience.

All that was attempted, was well done; yet, many pupils felt grieved that they could not have the privilege to be questioned on what they imagined to be their most valuable parts; indeed, many teachers were expecting to have their schools questioned at two several times; but the hour for closing had arrived, and the second hearing was necessarily denied.

At the close, the committee expressed themselves highly gratified—far beyond their most sanguine expectations. They confessed themselves sensible of the difficulty of their situation in adjudging and awarding premiums to a few, where all had done so well.

At this stage, was exhibited one of the most interesting and lovely scenes ever witnessed—the unanimous vote of the children, directing the premium money which was to be given

them, to be expended in the purchase of school books and distributed under the direction of the executive committee, to poor children in the next winter schools. Thus the pupils, in the day of their prosperity, remembered those less favored; some of whom were unable to be present on this happy examination day.

During the proceedings of the day, remarks were made by Dr. D. P. Holton, town superintendent, and by E. S. Shumway, Esq., county superintendent. At the close of the examination, he addressed the scholars and teachers on the subject of education, and impressed the subject on the minds of the younger portion of the audience, by interesting anecdotes and happy illustrations, which were attentively listened to by all.

We have been favored with the letters addressed to the examining committee, two of which we give below:

[We can only give extracts from these letters.]

To the Examining Committee:

WESTPORT, ESSEX CO., N. Y., Sept. 3, 1844.

GENTLEMEN:

As regards the utility of the scheme of common school examinations, there exists in our mind little or no doubt. We cannot speak from our own experience, yet from the experience and testimony of others more learned and better acquainted with men and things—cause and effect—we infer that we may expect incalculably great advantages to be derived from such an effort. Who can calculate the bearing a word, a look, or an effort like this, may have on an immortal mind? It may determine its destiny for time—yea, more—for eternity.

At these examinations, too, the teachers are expected to express their views and methods of instruction, with freedom, and whatever information one possesses more than another, in this way becomes common property. Here, too, the good teacher will be distinguished from the bad, and parents will be convinced that it is much better to hire a good teacher than a cheap one. Another argument in favor of examinations, is, that it always has been the practice, and has been deemed highly important, that there should be public examinations in the higher departments of education, as seminaries and colleges. Then surely, if it is important for those who have arrived at the age in which they ought or are expected to exercise reason, in retaining what they have learned, it is far more important for those so young that they cannot duly appreciate the advantages of an education. Then again, the Reports of the county superintendents of 1844, give an account of thirty-seven public examinations, all of which resulted well.

To close, we add, that it is our sincere wish, that not only this examination may result in good, but that the system of common schools may proceed in developing new and important methods, until we shall have a perfect structure, and one which we shall not be ashamed to present to the assembled nations of the earth.

Yours very truly,
ANNA McKAY,
In behalf of school district No. 8, taught by Miss Helen P. Carpenter.

GENTLEMEN: The scholars of the different schools are brought into competition and comparison with each other, and all the motives of the youthful mind are influenced and operated upon favorably to the increase of learning; no child is willing to be outdone by another of the same age; a spirit of emulation is thus encouraged; the eye of the parents and guardians is upon them, and a wish to stand well in their estimation, is natural to every youthful mind. Again, children instinctively pay more attention to the communications of those about their own age, and thus they learn from each other; remarks are also made by the superintendents and their friends, showing the importance of the improvement of youth, and of their obtaining a good education, and the variety of ways in which it can be made useful in after life:

thus stimulating the hope and desire which exists in every youthful breast to occupy a station of celebrity and usefulness in the world, the means of which are found alone in the preparatory studies of common schools. These considerations, and others of equal importance that might be made, will fully justify the friends of education in meeting together from time to time, for the purpose of watching over the progress of universal education, which is the hope of our country and the salvation of the world from tyrants and impostors. It is a matter of astonishment that so little is done on this subject, and we may be allowed to hope that what is being done in this town, may be but the commencement of an interest on the subject commensurate with its importance, and universal throughout our country.

Yours with respect,

ROBT R. STEVENSON.

In behalf of district school No. 1, taught by Miss B. M. Warner.

WESTPORT, ESSEX COUNTY, N. Y.

The plan of giving premiums, proposed by this association, is questionable—in our judgment bad. We should be glad to see it discussed in our columns.—Ed.

We take pleasure in calling the attention of our readers to an association recently formed in this town for increasing the benefits of our common schools.

We would respectfully suggest that the hearty co-operation of parents is requisite to the success of this scheme, as, indeed, of any schemes designed to improve our schools.

COMMON SCHOOL ASSOCIATION.

WHEREAS, Universal experience in teaching, shows the importance of occasional reviews and examinations—

AND WHEREAS, It is desirable to increase the utility of our schools, by encouraging a laudable spirit of emulation—

AND WHEREAS, The best means of effecting this, is believed to be, the assembling of the several schools at least once in each term, for a public examination by a suitable committee:

Therefore, We, the subscribers, hereby pledge our co-operation, and an annual payment of 25 cents, for the period of five years from date, for establishing a PREMIUM FUND, out of which ten per cent shall be appropriated to defray the expenses of an annual celebration, July 4th, and the semi-annual examination. One-third of the remainder shall be awarded to the teachers of our summer schools, and the remaining two-thirds shall be awarded to the teachers of our winter schools, as in the judgment of the examining committee shall best express the comparative efficiency of their labors, in view of all the circumstances which should be taken into account.

This association shall hold its annual meeting for the choice of officers, in the Baptist Church at Westport, on the third Monday in July. The officers shall be

1st. A president.

The town superintendent of common schools shall be the president; but in case of his resignation, the association may choose any member.

2d. A first vice-president.

3d. A second vice-president.

4th. A third vice-president.

The clergymen in charge of the several

Churches in town, shall be the vice-presidents.
 5th. A secretary, who shall also serve as collector.

6th. A treasurer.
 7th. A prudential committee, consisting of one from each district and joint district.

The officers shall perform the duties usually pertaining to such officers, and together constitute an executive committee, whose duty shall be to call meetings of teachers and the friends of education, at such times as the interests of schools may demand—to make suitable arrangements for the stated anniversaries and semi-annual examinations—to nominate and appoint an examining committee, and do all other business which the interests of the association require. The examining committee shall consist of three gentlemen not residents of Westport, together with the vice-presidents.
 Westport, July 14th, 1845.

[Here follow the names of upwards of two hundred gentlemen and ladies.]

At a meeting of the members of the Common School Association, held in the Baptist Church at Westport, July 21st, 1845, the following officers were chosen:

DAVID P. HOLTON, President,	
Rev. THOS. BRANDT,	
" R. T. WADE,	Vice-Presidents,
" C. SPOONER,	
C. B. HATCH, Secretary,	
J. H. LOW, Treasurer,	
Alex. Stevenson,	John Williams,
Albert P. Cole,	Samuel Root,
Jona. Nichols, Jr.,	Leonard Fisher,
Jared Goodale,	Andrew Frisbie,
Elijah Angier,	Daniel Nichols,
M. P. Whallon,	Imla Hartwell,
Marcus Storrs,	John Stone,

Prudential Committee.

Resolved, That the several schools be invited to unite in an examination at Wadhams' Falls, Wednesday, Sept. 3d, 1845, at 9 o'clock A. M.

Resolved, That the executive committee solicit subscriptions, payable Sept. 1st, 1845, to the treasurer of the association; one-third of which shall be appropriated at the summer examination, and the remaining two-thirds at the winter examination, and the same shall be awarded by the examining committee to one or more scholars, as shall best express their comparative excellence in the following departments, viz:

1st. Reading—selections from the New Testament.
 2d. Geography, including an atlas of geographical maps executed by the pupils.
 3d. Arithmetic, with exercises on the black-board.

4th. Spelling—as shown by the trial of "spelling down" the assembled scholars.

5th. Writing—including the entire set of writing exercises during the term, with the progressive dates.

6th. A book of trees, illustrating the principles of grammar with their practical application in parsing.

7th. Vocal music.

8th. The best and neatest letter, setting forth the advantages of school examinations, written,

folded, sealed, and directed to the examining committee, Westport, Essex co., N. Y.

Resolved, That the president be requested to write to such gentlemen out of town, as in his opinion will secure the attendance of three to act as an examining committee with the vice-presidents, September 3d.

Resolved, That the secretary inform the officers of their election, and call a meeting of the executive committee, August 4th, 1845, 5 o'clock P. M., at the house of Mr. C. B. Hatch, to appoint a marshal and assistant marshals for Sept. 3d, and complete their arrangements.

The foregoing is submitted for publication, that its merits, if any, may be extended; especially that the scheme may be perfected by those having more experience.

The subscriber respectfully solicits that some town superintendent would put in operation a better scheme, and submit his results to the readers of the Journal.

Will some one describe, definitely, the articles best suited for the teachers' premiums? Will any propose an appropriate medal or device? What shall be the scholars' premiums? Will any unite in an effort of this kind? Could the general deposit be made with some gentleman in Albany?

DAVID P. HOLTON,
 Town Superintendent.

[From the Watertown Jeffersonian]

JEFFERSON.

COMMON SCHOOL CELEBRATION.

The common schools of Watertown and Pamela, under the care of their respective teachers, held a celebration at Agricultural Hall, in this village, on Thursday of last week. What with the array of one thousand children belonging to those schools, the large number of persons in attendance, the eloquent addresses and the spirit-stirring music of the juvenile choir and by the band—the display of flags and banners with appropriate devices, &c., the celebration was an interesting and impressive affair.

The Throne of Grace was invoked by Rev. Mr. Knox, feelingly, fervently and devoutly. Hon. C. E. Chase followed, in an extempore address of nearly an hour, characterized by great clearness, force and directness.

The Rev. J. Burdett addressed the assemblage, with more than his usual eloquence and tact—defining clearly and concisely the pre-requisite qualifications of teachers, their duties as such, and also the duties of parents, guardians, &c.

The Hon. L. H. Bacon next addressed the assemblage, in a train of fervent eloquence. Although much was expected from him, he greatly exceeded the expectations of his friends, and won "golden opinions" from his auditors.

He spoke about 50 minutes, and was followed by P. MONTGOMERY Esq., the county superintendent, in a well considered, impressive and effective speech. Though following "as a gleaner"—to use his own words—he showed conclusively that much had been left unsaid which was important to be understood—that the wants of pupils and the spirit of the age demanded unflinching efforts on the part of the parents and teachers; that the common school system, though good, is susceptible of improvement, and that sound economy put less than sound morality, required that greater attention should be paid to the basis of free institutions—well cultivated minds.

The examination of the scholars reflected great credit upon their teachers, and went far to prove that much of good may be accomplished in our common schools. Several maps drawn by children from 7 to 14 years of age, attracted a good deal of attention and elicited warm approbation.

The excellent arrangements made and carried out by

A. P. SIGOURNEY Esq., of Watertown, and Doctor SUMNER of Pamela, town superintendents, contributed greatly to the pleasures of the day, and many left the Hall fully impressed that at least one day had been rightly and profitably spent. We hail these celebrations as the dawn of a new era in the cause of education and the onward march of mind, and predict that each succeeding year will further demonstrate the advantages of our common school system and the wise foresight of its projectors.

"When goods and money all are spent,
Learning is most excellent."

[From the Rochester Daily Democrat.]

MONROE.

EXTRACTS FROM THE TEACHERS' AND SUPERINTENDENTS' COUNTY CONVENTION.

The convention of teachers and town superintendents assembled at the school-house of district No. 1, in this city, on Wednesday forenoon.

Dr. Reid, of Rochester, was chosen president—Ira Bellows, of Pittsford, vice-president—and Jason W. Seward, county superintendent, secretary.

Mr. Barnes, of Rochester, presented the claims of the "Teachers' Advocate," a periodical lately started under the auspices of the teachers' state convention.

Mr. Jones, from the committee on resolutions, reported in part.

The preamble and first and second resolutions, after some observations from Mr. Jones, were unanimously adopted.

Whereas, The interest manifested in regard to common school education, within the few years past, by the friends of popular education, and the consequent improvement in our common schools, afford abundant evidence that our common school system, and the measures adopted to carry it out, are in the main, correct. Therefore,

1. Resolved, That we will continue to agitate the subject of common school education, and the improvement of our schools, while there remains anything to be said or done that shall have a tendency to improve their usefulness.

2. Resolved, That we will adopt those measures which experience has proved to be the best—rejecting whatever proves deleterious in practice, however plausible the theory, or from whatever source it may originate.

The third resolution was objected to by some gentlemen, on account of indefiniteness; and on motion of Mr. Mack, it was recommitted to the committee, for revision. It was afterwards adopted, as follows:

3. Resolved, That the increased interest in common schools, and the improved condition of those in this state, since the adoption of the system of county and town superintendents, prove conclusively the wisdom of this measure; and in justice to our schools, the same supervision should be continued.

On motion of Mr. Treat, Mr. Mack, the city superintendent, was added to the committee on resolutions.

The fourth resolution is as follows:

4. Resolved, That in the selection of school officers, no principle should operate but fitness for the office; and we believe as a general thing, those are best qualified to superintend schools, who have had experience in the duties of the school-room.

To this, Mr. Bixby moved the following as a substitute:

Resolved, That no person shall be deemed qualified for county superintendent of common schools, who has not had the experience of at least three years in teaching common schools.

Mr. Bixby went on to remark, that those who had taught in colleges and academies, knew but little of public schools, and were often unfit for the office.

Mr. Johnson had no objection to the resolution in its original form. He could not go with the Syracuse convention on this point. He believed that there were men who never taught schools, that were well qualified for the office of superintendent. He thought there were teachers who had taught ten, fifteen, and twenty years, who knew nothing, or next to nothing, of their business. The offices should be thrown open to all, and all would feel an interest in them.

Mr. Bixby thought teaching should be an exclusive profession in this country, as in Prussia. Law and physic were exclusive, and it would be considered absurd to throw those professions open to all. If the superintendents were not teachers, the office would often fall to some political hack, or broken down minister or lawyer. He thought that the common school system of this state, as carried out, was a humbug, because every person is eligible to the highest office, whether a fool or knave.

While this resolution was under discussion, the convention passed a ten minutes rule in reference to speakers.

Mr. Johnson regarded the superintendent as an executive officer, and did not deem it necessary that he should be an actual teacher.

Dr. Howard, superintendent of Ogden, thought many things should be considered in the appointment of superintendents. Teachers were usually young men, often but little known, while the superintendent was generally a man of some note, in the town. His principal duty was to disburse moneys, change the forms of districts, &c., and do other executive business, which he could probably do better than teachers. It was unwise he thought, to exclude all but teachers. It required the exercise of great discretion and prudence in healing divisions, &c. The resolution, as proposed by Mr. B., was not a democratic one. It was a narrow, proscriptive, "native American" resolution, which he earnestly hoped the convention would reject.

Mr. Jones, of Mumford, felt compelled to oppose the amendment. The original resolution comprised all they had a right to. It would be impolitic in them to exclude any class. Nothing should operate but fitness. Politics should not govern in the selection, nor should the candidate be taken exclusively from the office of teachers. Many superintendents not teachers, had filled offices with great ability. The passage of the resolution would be highly injudicious.

Mr. Bixby rose to explain. He did not intend to say that all who were not at the time actual teachers, should be ineligible. He considered many who had formerly been engaged in teaching, as teachers still, and eligible to the office.

Prof. Dewey called attention to that part of the substitute which prescribed that three years' experience should be necessary to qualify a man for that office.

Mr. Barnes was decidedly in favor of the original resolution, as it placed the office on the broad ground of fitness; though he was of opinion that teachers were often best qualified.

Mr. Meriman combatted the idea thrown out, that a teacher who had given up the business fifteen or twenty years ago, was fit for important

offices now. Great improvements had been made, which they had not kept pace with. The county superintendent, he thought, should be a man of education and talent, and capable of managing the best institutions in the country. He thought the mover of the resolution actuated by an improper spirit, and having an eye to the "loaves and fishes."

Mr. Bixby enquired if the speaker meant to be personal in his application of the "loaves and fishes."

Mr. Meriman did not mean to be personal, and refused to explain further, as that would give his remarks a personal character.

Mr. Brown did not understand the drift of the resolution; it was too tame, and asserted little or nothing. He saw no necessity of passing it.

The chair explained that they had just passed a resolution to agitate questions connected with common schools.

Mr. Jones and Mr. Barnes made further remarks on the political motives that had, in some instances, governed the selection of superintendents. They were strongly in favor of the present system of supervision.

The substitute was then put, and lost, and the original resolution adopted.

ROCHESTER FREE SCHOOLS.

[Extract from Annual Report—June, 1845.]

The attendance at the several schools the past year, has been as follows:

In District No.	1,	aggregate,	366	average,	311
" 2,	do	do	366	do	216
" 3,	do	do	413	do	298
" 4,	do	do	225	do	148
" 5,	do	do	467	do	247
" 6,	do	do	479	do	348
" 7,	do	do	78	do	48
" 8,	do	do	62	do	51
" 9,	do	do	381	do	156
" 10,	do	do	410	do	358
" 11,	do	do	396	do	169
" 12,	do	do	367	do	222
" 13,	do	do	148	do	75
" 14,	do	do	445	do	238
" 15,	do	do	297	do	116
Colored school,			153	do	39

This shows an increase in the aggregate attendance over last year, of 700; and in the average attendance, of 368.

The number of children between the ages of 5 and 16 years residing in the city on the 1st of January last, as shown by the several reports on file in the office of the superintendent, is 8690: of whom 91 are colored children. The number of those who have attended the public schools some portion of the year, as already shown, is—

Estimated number attending the incorporated and private schools,.....	600
.....	3446—4046

Leaving the probable number of 344 who have not attended any school—added to this, it is seen, the average non-attendance is very large, being something over 2000.

The amount of money raised by tax the past year, or the support of schools (exclusive of the contingent expenses of the Board is—\$10,400-00

The amount received from the State, is— 2,298-00

Total,\$12,698-00

It is seen that the amount apportioned to each child in the city between the ages of 5 and 16 years, is \$1.93.

That the annual cost to each child receiving more or less instruction in the public schools, is \$2.42; while the cost to each child on the average attendance, is only \$4.00—a smaller sum, it is believed, than is ex-

pended for the education of so large a number in any city in the Union.

The operations of the schools the past year, have been more harmonious than during any previous one, and the board are led to regard the system of free public schools in the city, as having become permanently rooted in the favor of the people; its utility or continuance can no longer be regarded as problematical—and its benign influence not only upon the children and youth of the city, but by reflection upon the parents and guardians, is now felt through every department of society.

The increased interest manifested by the numerous attendance of parents and others at the spring examinations, has cheered and encouraged the board, and has given the most tangible proof of a favorable change in public sentiment in regard to our schools.

The cause of education seems emphatically the great cause of the age in which we live: moral and mental elevation seems destined to become the distinguishing feature of the rising generation—and the impression is daily gaining strength, that in no way so surely can the social, moral, and pecuniary condition of any people be improved, as by raising higher and still higher the standard of popular education.

To effect this, requires the hearty co-operation of public opinion. This can only be secured by a candid consideration of the subject on the part of our fellow citizens, and by a judicious administration of school affairs.

To witness the change that has been wrought in the minds of a large number of our more wealthy citizens on this subject, has been a source of sincere gratification to the board. It is now a sentiment nearly instinctive in every man's heart, that the public schools are entitled to the united support of all. That the subject of schools is one which has no sympathy with sectarian or party feeling, and that no one but he who would aim at their overthrow, would seek to identify their administration with either.

The board would do violence to their own feelings should they close this brief report without a becoming acknowledgement of the obligation they are under to the teachers of the public schools for their most valuable services the past year, and their faithful and intelligent co-operation. And in resigning the trusts which have been committed to us, to our successors in office, we cordially commend the teachers to their confidence and favor; and the schools to their kindly sympathy and watchful vigilance.

L. K. FAULKNER, President.

[For the District School Journal.]

ONONDAGA.

COMMON SCHOOL CELEBRATION.

We regret that this notice has been unavoidably postponed until this time.—Ed.

The sixty-ninth anniversary of our nation's birthday was celebrated at Fabius, by the several schools of the town, in a manner highly creditable to the inhabitants, and well calculated to arouse the community to the important subject of universal education.

At an early hour in the day, the several schools of the town, with their teachers, joined each other a short distance from the village, where they were met by the "Fabius Brass Band"—the members of which kindly volunteered their services on the occasion—and escorted them into the village. It was truly an animating and imposing scene, to witness the long train of wagons drawn by four horses each, and filled with smiling, happy youths, each bearing a beautiful banner with some appropriate motto.

I should fail, should I undertake to give an adequate description of the exercises of the day, consequently must forbear. Handbills and circulars were sent throughout the town to the several districts, and a general invita-

tion was extended to the inhabitants, and all interested in the common school enterprise. On the arrival of the schools, they were received by the town superintendent in front of the academy, (now occupied as a district school house,) and appropriate places assigned them in the procession.

At ten o'clock, A. M., the citizens under the direction of the marshals, the children under that of the superintendent, formed in procession, and marched around the west square of the village, each headed by a band of music. Arrived at the green of the Baptist church, the children were comfortably seated under a bower provided for the occasion.

The exercises of the forenoon commenced with music from the band, and singing by the juvenile choir. Prayer was then offered by Rev. H. Tremain, after which the Declaration of Independence was read by L. M. Pratt, superintendent of common schools, and was followed by an address from O. L. Sprague, Esq. on the subject of education. The address was one of the first order, and drew forth the highest commendation from those who had the pleasure of listening to it. The exercises were interspersed with music from the band, and juvenile singing, which contributed much to the interest of the day, and happily gratifying to all present. The exercises of the forenoon having concluded, the children again formed in procession and marched to the basement of the church, where a rich and bountiful supply of refreshments was provided by the inhabitants of each district. After a short recess, the children formed in procession and marched to the east end of the village, and back to the stand, when they listened to a spirited and well timed address from Mr. Truair, of Otsego county. Mr. Truair was very happy in his remarks, and adapted them peculiarly to the capacity of children, and the interest they manifested on the occasion, was enough to convince any one present that a favorable impression was left on their minds.

The several schools were then called upon in order, and each teacher given an opportunity for an examination of their scholars in some particular branch.

The first school prepared was District No. 3, Miss Moon, teacher. One in declamation, and a class in astronomy—explained upon the black-board. The examination did much honor to the teacher, as well as pupils, illustrating practically the advantages of the black-board in teaching geography. District No. 2, Miss Sherman, teacher, a class in concert reading. District No. 10, Miss Irish, teacher, a class in Geography. District No. 9, Mr. Clark, teacher, declamation and concert reading, by a class of fifty. Much credit is due the teachers for their efforts and untiring exertions in the cause of common school education.

The schools were all, with but one or two exceptions, present, and the number of chil-

dren was estimated at seven hundred. A larger and more respectable assemblage of people, was never before witnessed in this town, on any occasion.

Thus passed off the "glorious fourth," in Fabius, not an accident having occurred to mar the enjoyments and festivities of the day.

VINDEK.

Fabius, Onondaga Co., N. Y.

TIOGA.

The Tioga County Common School Teachers' Association met at the district school-house in the village of Owego, on Saturday, the 17th of May, according to previous notice. The president, John M. Parker, Esq., being absent, Chas. R. Coburn, of Owego, was elected president pro tem. After the meeting was organized, the following resolutions were discussed and passed unanimously.

On motion of Dr. Elijah Powell, county superintendent,

Resolved, That in the opinion of this association, moral instruction is of paramount importance, and that the teacher who neglects to enforce moral truth by example as well as precept, is deficient in one of the most important qualifications of a teacher of youth. This resolution was supported by Dr. Powell in some very appropriate and feeling remarks.

On motion of Andrew Coburn,

Resolved, That the office of county superintendent is of great utility to common schools, and that we will at all times urge the necessity of continuing said office. Remarks were made by Andrew Coburn, the mover, showing the great benefit the office of county superintendent had been to the schools in this county, by Amos C. Stedman, town superintendent of Owego, and Willis Atkins, town superintendent of Spencer, and to the same point by Dr. J. L. Corbin, of Owego, giving some of the reasons why that office was so unpopular with the people.

On motion of Charles R. Coburn,

Resolved, That every person who intends to become an intelligent and successful teacher, should be a subscriber for, and a constant reader of the District School Journal. Remarks by the mover contrasting the conduct of teachers with men in other business; while the lawyer, the physician, the clergyman, the politician, the mechanic and the farmer, strive to become better qualified to perform the duties devolving upon them by reading or studying the opinions, advice and experience of others in their respective professions who have become eminent for their wisdom and success, the teacher, as a general thing, is plodding his way along unaided by the counsel or advice of those who have toiled and are now toiling in the same business. Also by Dr. Corbin, showing the value of the Journal to all in any way engaged in the cause of education. On motion of Dr. E. Powell,

Resolved, That the individuals who faithfully discharge the duties of town superintendent or teacher, are conferring incalculable benefits on the rising generation, and ought to receive the support of all classes in community. Remarks by the mover as to the responsibility resting upon the teacher also by O. D. Davis of Spen-

peer, and Charles R. Coburn, showing the extent of the influence exerted by the teacher, not only upon the rising generation, but also upon generations yet unborn; which influence the teacher must meet, with all its fearful responsibilities at the bar of God.

By request, Charles R. Coburn gave an account of his recent visit to Albany, where he spent three weeks in the State Normal School. He described the principal and professors of the institution, the arrangement, classification and management, the studies pursued, together with the mode of instruction and other interesting details. From the account given by Mr. Coburn, the association was deeply impressed with the importance of its permanent continuance, as a valuable means of furnishing the state and nation with a supply of thoroughly educated teachers.

Resolved, That the proceedings of this meeting be published in the papers of this county and in the District School Journal published at Albany.

CHARLES R. COBURN,

Pres't pro tem.

J. L. CONNOR, *Rec. Sec.*

The Tioga County Teachers' Association met at the district school-house in the village of Owego. The meeting was called to order by electing O. D. Davis, teacher of Spencer, president pro tem., and Charles R. Coburn, teacher of Owego, secretary. A committee consisting of Willis Atkins, town superintendent of Spencer, and Chas. R. Coburn was appointed by the chair to prepare business for the afternoon session. Adjourned until half past twelve.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

The delegates to the Teachers' State Convention at Syracuse were called upon for a report. Whereupon Charles R. Coburn gave a brief statement of the proceedings of said convention from its organization up to the time of his leaving—being the afternoon of the second day's session.

The Rev. Mr. Peck of the Baptist church then gave an entertaining and instructive address filled with good advice to teachers and parents. On motion of Charles R. Coburn, a vote of thanks was presented to the speaker for his plain, practical and excellent address.

The committee on resolutions then reported the following resolution:

Resolved, That the time has arrived when the teachers of the state of New-York ought to have a periodical—and if such paper should be established, we will do all in our power to sustain it.

Resolved, That in the opinion of this association, the business of teaching should be made a profession as much as the practice of law or medicine.

These resolutions were adopted after an animated discussion, the last one particularly elicited much interest. The inconvenience attending the adopting and carrying out the spirit of the resolution, was set forth on the one hand, and on the other the manifold advantages that would arise from it, both to teachers and patrons of schools; and that the obstacles were no greater in this than in all instances where new and great reforms were proposed.

Upon invitation, Mr. Pearsall, editor of the Owego Gazette, made some general remarks upon our school system, also upon the resolution under consideration showing the necessity of those engaged in teaching making it a profession, and so qualifying themselves for the business, as to ensure them steady employment and a fair compensation for their services.

O. D. DAVIS, *Pres. pro tem.*

CHARLES R. COBURN, *Sec. pro tem.*

TIOGA.

[Extract from an Address delivered before a County Convention of Common School Teachers, held in Owego, Aug. 2, 1844, by Rev. Mr. Peck.]

"There are, however, many most honorable exceptions among this class, who, true to the spirit of the pilgrim fathers, cease not to seek proper channels, through which to pour their liberal benefactions and with which to bless the present and unborn generations. High in this list stands the name of the noble and lamented Wadsworth of our own state. Such cause the widow's heart to sing for joy—eyes are they to the blind—feet are they to the lame—fathers are they to the poor—and the cause they know not they search out. Were the examples of the noble few followed by the rich as a class, even then their ample treasures would avail but little in producing or perpetuating this difference without another and mightier agency.

Nor should we look for the occasion of this difference in the influence of academies and universities. As confessedly useful and important as are these institutions to a necessary and extensive intelligence, they avail but little in elevating the whole people. France, Germany, England and other countries of middle Europe, have long had their universities. Ireland has had hers too—but the effect has been to produce only here and there a fertile spot; while the vast territory around remained a barren waste. The same is true and has been to a great extent, of the states of our union already referred to. They have always had their universities and their cultivated intellectual giants as their fruits, but the masses have been neglected and must still be for aught these can do. To these, then, we cannot look as the radical cause of the distinguished position, which we, the common people, hold over the masses of other nations. If it is not, then, the form of our government—nor the freedom of the press—nor the accountability of the ruler to the ruled—nor the power of wealth—nor the influence of academies and universities, (however important all these may be to the result as second causes,) I ask if these are not the great agency, what is it? It is our system of popular education. It is our system of common schools. It is the idea of universal education reduced to practice. This is the great hinge of influence, more than any other, on which has turned our happy destiny. It stands highest in the list of second causes. Indeed so truthfully may it be called the great, efficient agency, that were it to perish, its vacuum would be the shadow of death, through which the other agencies must speed their passage to hopeless ruin. But leave to us our system of popular education in vigorous operation; then obliterate our form of government and we would hit upon the same again—shackle the press, and we would declare it

free—put upon our necks the tyrant's yoke, and we would break it, and slay him and his minions with its fragments—crush us under a moneyed aristocracy and we would on principles of equal justice turn its golden streams into channels, to bless the poor, the widow and orphan—yea, demolish our academies and universities, and from their ashes, phoenix-like, would spring others of equal fame.

“But what is this system—its foundation—superstructure and furniture? It is founded in benevolence—in pure good will. This is its chief corner stone. It is constructed of the principles of equal rights and protection to the poor. It is furnished with houses of refuge, in which are eyes for the blind, ears for the deaf, and understanding for the simple. This is the system. It is impartial; it knows no name, no sect, no cast, no color—all are alike invited to partake of its benefits. Its object is to promote universal intelligence and virtue; to banish semi-barbarism from every nook and corners of the land.

“But what is this system without proper agents to work it. What are school-houses, (houses of refuge for intellect,) libraries, officers, literary funds, &c., without the common school teachers. It constitutes a splendid and perfect machine, but destitute of the motive power. The teacher is this power. It gives us a body perfect in its form and adaptation, but it is lifeless, till the presence of the common school teacher animates it. Teachers! you are the *sine qua non* of the system. Without you it is nothing. You are its animating principle—upon you therefore as a class, more than any other of the secondary agencies, depend the perpetuity of all that is excellent in our national character and institutions, above other nations. Is it exaggeration then to affirm, that your calling takes rank—nay high rank among the useful and honorable? The thrift, intelligence and virtue of the producing classes, the bone and sinew of our country, and the eminent in the learned professions, many of whom were the offspring of orphanage and poverty, as they call to mind the spring of their ambition, answer no!—nay the cultivated fields and thriving villages, with their glittering spires, pointing heavenward, that dot the landscape at every view, send up the responsive reply, no! no!! Turn where you will and the same reply will meet you, except from two sources. Those whose children never suffered the so called disgrace of association with the children of the populace, and who of course never condescend to so low, or rather so high a profession, as common school teaching; and those who hate knowledge, and despise reproof. By such your calling will never be appreciated. This is their folly, and as the fruits of it, they furnish by far the greatest proportion of fops and fools on the one hand, and the embodiment of vice and crime on the other. The mass of the intelligent, however, in whose hearts, not on whose tongues, virtue has fixed her abode, will award to you the honor due to your exalted station.”

WAYNE.

WAYNE COUNTY COMMON SCHOOL ASSOCIATION.

For agent to office, a meeting of the Wayne County Common School Association was held at the Court House, in Lyons, on the 22d day of August, inst.

On taking the chair, the president of the association, John M. Holley Esq., briefly stated the object of the meeting, and the success which had attended thus far the efforts of the association.

On motion of Samuel Cole, Esq., committees on teachers' institutes, town associations and common school celebrations, were appointed.

The committee on teachers' institutes reported the following resolutions, which were unanimously adopted:

Resolved, That we regard teachers' institutes as powerful auxiliaries in promoting the cause of education, by educating the teachers in not only the great principles of science, but also in the most approved methods of teaching, and that in our opinion, such institutes ought to be established in each of the counties of this state.

Resolved, That the county superintendent, John T. Mackenzie, Esq., and Professor N. Brittan, &c., and are hereby appointed a committee to make the necessary arrangements for, and establish a teachers' institute in Lyons, and such others, at such places in the county as they may deem proper, on or before the 22d day of September next; that they give notice of the same through the several newspapers in the county, and that teachers throughout the county are respectfully invited and expected to attend the same, preparatory to engaging in the business of their profession.

The committee on town associations and celebrations, reported the following resolutions, which were unanimously adopted, viz:

Resolved, That in view of the beneficial results which follow from the establishment of town associations and the holding of common school celebrations, by affording to the teacher increased facilities for improvement in the art of teaching, and awakening anew an interest in the mind of the patron as well as the pupil, we earnestly recommend the immediate organization of such association in each of the towns in this county, and that the town superintendents of the several towns are requested to use their efforts in establishing the same.

Resolved, That we recommend the holding of public examinations or celebrations of the schools, in the several towns in this county, at the close of each term, and that parents and all others interested be invited to attend the same.

J. M. HOLLEY, President.

J. T. Mackenzie, Secretary.

[For the District School Journal.]

THE PLASTER BLACKBOARD.

Perhaps no greater improvement has been made in any of the appendages of the school-room, than in that useful article the blackboard.

This improvement consists in the use of colored plaster instead of the painted board. It has many considerations to recommend it. The chalk is used upon it *without noise*. It is easily erased. There is no reflection of light thus obstructing the sight; and last, though not least, it is very much cheaper than boards.

In erecting a building the black surface can be put on at a very trifling expense. It can be applied to any old surface with equal facility. Any common mason can apply it who knows how to use the “hard finish.” We may do the cause of common schools an essential service by giving the following simple directions for

MAKING THE PLASTER BLACKBOARD.

First, wet a sufficient quantity of lamp-black with alcohol, to color the plaster to be used, and mix this coloring with the “hard finish,” at the time of putting it on.

The lamp-black may be wet with sour beer instead of alcohol. If it be wet with water it will not mix uniformly with the plaster on account of the oily matter contained in it, and the surface will not dry uniformly black, but will have a spotted appearance.

DISTRICT SCHOOL JOURNAL.

ALBANY, OCTOBER, 1845.

TEACHERS' ADVOCATE.

This is the title of a new school journal recently established at Syracuse, under a resolution of the teachers' convention. Its editor, EDWARD COOPER, Esq., as principal of various academies in different parts of the state, has manifested great zeal and devotion in the cause of education, and we trust that his journal will be distinguished as the eloquent and successful advocate of its interests.

STATE NORMAL SCHOOL.

The full notice of the recent review of the Normal School, given by the Evening Journal and Argus, makes any further account unnecessary. In a word, it was worthy of the reputation of the school.

BOARD OF INSTRUCTION.

DAVID P. PAGE, Principal.
 GEORGE R. PERKINS, A. M., Prof. of Mathematics.
 SUMNER C. WEBB, Assistant Teacher of Arithmetic.
 SILAS T. BOWEN, Assistant Teacher of Grammar and Geography.
 WILLIAM W. CLARK, Assistant Teacher of Natural Philosophy and Chemistry.
 WILLIAM F. PHELPS, Assistant Teacher of the Experimental School.
 MISS ELIZABETH C. HANCE, Assistant Teacher of Reading and Spelling.

F. J. ILSLEY, Prof. of Vocal Music.
 J. B. HOWARD, Prof. of Drawing.

LIBRARY.

Besides an abundant supply of text-books for the use of the pupils, there is connected with the Institution, a valuable educational and miscellaneous library, consisting of about six hundred volumes. This library was mainly procured by funds received from the heirs of the late Hon. James Wadsworth, of Genesee.

APPARATUS, &c.

The school is already supplied with a valuable philosophical apparatus, and also with globes, maps and charts, and other means for illustrating the various sciences taught. Additions will be made to the apparatus of the school, till it shall be sufficient for all the purposes of instruction.

LECTURES.

During each term, a course of lectures will be given by the Principal, and Professor of Mathematics, on various topics connected with teaching and the teacher. Other distinguished individuals have occasionally favored the school with lectures, by invitation of the Principal.

During the past term, lectures by the Principal have been given, on various subjects.

The Professor of Mathematics has given courses of lectures on Mathematical and Physical Geography—Tides—Laws of Motion—Laws of Falling Bodies—Mechanical Powers—Teaching Arithmetic, &c., &c.

A course of twelve chemical lectures was delivered to the school by Professor MATHER, illustrated by experiments. Hon. SALEM TOWN and J. H. MATHER, Esq., by invitation, favored the school, each with several practical lectures.

Among the other individuals who have lectured by invitation, may be mentioned, Rev. Dr. PORTER, of Union College—Prof. HENRY, of Princeton—JAMES HENRY, Jr. Esq., of Herkimer county—Prof. COMSTOCK, of Philadelphia—and FRANCIS DWIGHT, of Albany.

THE NEXT TERM OPENS ON THE 15TH INST.

STATE NORMAL GRADUATES.

The subjoined is a list of the graduates:

FEMALES.

CAROLINE SMITH,	Rensselaer county.
PHIBE C. CAIRER,	Madison
FRANCES M. HASTINGS,	Oneida
ELIZABETH C. HANCE,	Wayne
NANCY CROSS,	Schoharie

MALES.

JAMES D. ADAMS,	Ontario
SILAS T. BOWEN,	Otsego
Wm. W. CLARK,	Livingston
DENNIS B. CHAPIN,	Allegany
WARREN DEMON,	Genesee
REUBEN H. BINGHAM,	Saratoga
JAS. LYBANDER ENOS,	Wyoming
JAS. LA. ROY EAT,	Madison
MARTIN EDGERTON,	Oneida
DANIEL GALENTINE,	Monroe
NELSON W. BUTTS,	Orleans
WM. VAN OLINDA,	Lewis
GILBERT TRAYER,	Essex
WILLIAM WATSON,	Monroe
HENRY MCGONEGAL,	Tompkins
DANIEL LOSSY,	Onondaga
REUBEN R. STETSON,	Franklin
JAS. W. MANDEVILLE,	Chenango
EDW. C. SEYMOUR,	Tompkins
ERASMUS D. KINGSLEY,	Erie
GEO. C. MOTT,	Greene
VOLNEY S. HUBBARD,	Jefferson
ALFRED NICHOLS,	Madison
WILLIAM SCHMIDT,	Columbia
WILLIAM NIMS,	Washington
SUMNER C. WEBB,	Cortland
ELBA NEWLAND,	Livingston
WM. F. PHELPS,	Cayuga
REUBEN OTTMAN,	Schoharie

NEGLECT OF LIBRARIES.—A REMEDY SUGGESTED.

[For the Journal.]

Mr. DWIGHT—I very well know it is not pleasant to look at the dark side of the picture when contemplating our institutions, but prudence admonishes us to look at both sides. Entertaining these views, I must add that there are probably hundreds of school districts in the state, the inhabitants of which do not avail themselves of the advantages of the libraries in their districts.

I have frequently heard the librarians of districts say that not a book was called for from one month to another, and sometimes for six

months in succession. This subject ought to be agitated by every newspaper in the state. I have something to say about the delinquency of town superintendents, aye, and of county superintendents, too, which I will send you if you wish it.

TEACHER.

Perrysville, Madison co., August, 1845.

We hope our correspondent will fulfil his promise and expose whatever may require amendment or reprehension in any part of the working of the school system. Our columns have ever been open to every communication whose spirit was good and whose object was improvement.

The statements in regard to the district libraries, however unwelcome, are corroborated by the returns made to the department. The following extract from the report of J. J. Rockafellow, county superintendent of the southern district of Allegany, graphically portrays the bright and the dark side of this picture, and we call attention to it for the purpose of inquiring whether some remedial action is not possible and practicable?

DISTRICT LIBRARIES.—The whole number of volumes in all the libraries, as reported by the librarians at the time of visitation, is 9086
Average number in circulation for the summer, .. 1430

Leaving a balance of 7606

District 9 in the town of Genesee has no district library, for the reasons that they have a large, well selected circulating library, and have never fully approved of our library regulations. They therefore choose rather to lose the benefit of the library money than to throw themselves under such "rigid, unreasonable" restrictions. District No. 8 in the same town, district No. 11 in the town of Independence, district No. 11 in the town of Alfred, and district No. 6 in the town of Scio, are also destitute, having been organized since the last apportionment of library money. The books are generally in good condition. In most districts they are read with a good deal of interest and are duly appreciated. In others they are allowed to sleep upon their shelves month after month—if they have shelves; otherwise, they are often crammed away in some remote nook or greasy hole of a pantry, as though they were the most valueless things of earth's valuables. In a few instances, upon opening the library case, I have beheld a heterogeneous mass of books, newspapers, antediluvian scraps and documents, dirty snuff boxes, greasy candlesticks, shaving implements, and in one instance a nest of young vermin! The condition of those districts and their schools is analogous. But these were extreme cases, and perhaps ought to be withheld. I regret to say that many injudicious selections have been made—works of a pernicious tendency; some through ignorance of the real character of works selected, others through carelessness, and a few from choice. "Thaddeus of Warsaw," "Tales of the Ocean," "Pirates' Own Book," and a few others of similar stamp, have found way into almost every library. In every case their removal has been promptly urged, and generally performed. A great many are kept in very bad taste, or rather without taste—catalogue and library the very pictures of chaos. Among other novel circumstances, I found one library stuffed away in an old wood box, down in one corner of the house. I examined the catalogue, and found at the bottom "ninety-nine books in the hole," very appropriately, for they were all jammed down in a dirty hole. From other catalogues, I read, "Tales of a Grandfather," "Tales of American Youth," "Tales for Children," &c. These are specimens among hundreds equally ridiculous and unpardonable. I would not make an illiberal attack upon the ignorance of parents, for I am but too well aware that they were destitute of those great educational advantages which their children are enjoying. It is their sheer carelessness of which I complain. The

titles of these books are all before them, and hence they have no apology whatever to offer for this abuse of the English language.

"The establishment of libraries," says Mr. Lindsley, county superintendent of Yates, "is ten years in advance of public opinion; a generation must pass away before they will be read." "Our libraries," says Mr. Cooke, county superintendent of Niagara, "are rather lights under a bushel than on a candlestick."

And is there no remedy? It is easy to reply that a taste must be created; but how can it be done?

We must begin with the children. The art of reading is now taught, the taste to use the art must be cultivated, until the mind craves knowledge, as the body food. Then the library will be valued as the treasury of riches "that waste not in the using," and books, that are books, will become the companions and friends of those barren hours which now drag so wearily onward, scattering few seeds on the field of thought, but tares, for life's great harvest. Then the Martyrs, the Heroes, the Sages of humanity; its Socrates', its Hampdens, its Howards, its Washingtons, its Franklins and its Shakespeares, will find a reverential but cordial welcome in the homes from which ignorance now churlishly excludes those, whose presence would honor and whose influence would bless. "For a good book is the best of friends, the same to-day and forever; unalterably it speaketh the truth, warped not by envy or interest;—thy sin, thy glander or neglect chilleth not, quencheth not its love;—it listeneth or it speaketh when thou listest;—it praiseth thy good without envy, it chideth thine evil without malice;—it is thy willing slave and thine unbending teacher;—it draws thee out of self, thy petty plans and cautions, to teach thee what thou lackest, to tell thee how largely thou art blest;—to lure thee from thy sorrow and to graft another's wisdom on the barren stock of thy own thought."

Such is the glorious office of the good book; such the exalted privilege of those who can hold communion with the great and good of all time. And yet it is unvalued by thousands, who hold the key of knowledge in their hands, without a wish to unlock its treasures. Life is to them a blank, a weariness;—aimless, hopeless; its pathway full of the pitfalls of ignorance, and leading at every step deeper into the gloomy shades of superstition. It is therefore a question of momentous importance, whether there is not a remedy for this evil; whether the million and a half of volumes now in the libraries of our districts are to be the means of forming a new

race, of purer, wiser, happier citizens, or to become the food of moths, in the "holes" and "corn baskets" in which they now are kept. Were there but few districts and small sections of the state, where the libraries were neglected, we hardly should press this subject, rather waiting patiently for the gradual awakening of intelligent interest; but the number is large and if a remedy cannot be found, there is danger that the library system itself, admirable and beneficent as it is, will be in jeopardy.

We, therefore, earnestly call upon superintendents and teachers, to devise and apply a remedy to this corroding evil, and if no better plan is proposed, we trust they will adopt one which has been successfully tested in a few districts.

A REMEDY.

Let Wednesday afternoon, or at least an hour of the afternoon, be set apart by the teacher for questioning and conversing on the books drawn from the library. Call upon some of the more intelligent pupils to relate any fact read in those books that may have interested them, and upon some who are less advanced, to read some short passages, making them the occasion of remarks, sometimes relating an anecdote or stating any fact that will illustrate the same subject. For the teacher, the Germans say, should be a good story teller, and we assume that he is equal to his duties. Connect with this reading and conversational exercise, information in regard to the events of the day, referring to the map to show the pupils where the Russians are now carrying on their operations in the Caucasus, where the free ports are, opened by China, or through what region our army is now moving to the frontiers of Texas. In this manner books will be associated with the business and interests of life, and connected with the exercises of the school. The pupils becoming interested, will not only draw books with avidity, but take them to their homes and make them the subject of conversation, awakening a wish in their several families to know what pleases and interests their children. Thus the circle of readers extends, until the library is prized as the best friend of the district.

"There is no difficulty," we may be told, "in trying this experiment, where the library is kept in the school-house; the teacher is sub-librarian, and suitable books are found in the library adapted to the age and wants of the children." There is little difficulty in most cases, we reply, if the teacher is anxious to test its practicability. Suitable books are generally to be found in the library, and although the number adapted to chil-

dren is usually too small, it will soon be increased by the trustees, if they see this class of books thus made subservient to the good of the children. If the books are not kept in the school-house, there will be more trouble imposed upon the teacher, but there are many teachers in every county who cheerfully encounter much greater difficulties in their earnest devotion to duty. The good teacher says with Leggett, "satisfy me that it is right, and I will find a way to reduce it to practice."

The occasional exercise, called "Topics," now in somewhat general use, might also be made subservient to rendering the library more interesting and useful both to the school and to the district. Geography and history should be so taught as frequently to send the pupil anxious for farther knowledge, to the library of the district. But we must leave the subject, with those who feel and are able to unfold its relation, to the well being of the communities in which they are called to labor.

THE PAST, THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE.

In perusing the last annual report of the County Superintendent of the southern section of Washington county, (WILLIAM WARREN, Esq.,) we were forcibly struck with the contrast which it so ably and forcibly exhibits, between the present and the past condition of the schools under his supervision, and with the sanguine but lucid and well digested views of the future in which he indulges. What has here been done, with reference to a portion only, of the schools of a single county, we hope to be able at an early day to present, with reference to the entire state; to note the progress which has been made under the existing system of supervision, in elevating the character and extending the influence of our common schools—to contrast their present condition with that in which they were found not only by the County Superintendents on their first visitations, and by the gentlemen in different sections of the state who had previously been designated as visitors, under a special act of the legislature passed in 1839—and to show distinctly and specifically the source of the manifest improvement which has been the result, in the more thorough, efficient and uniform supervision growing out of the system of County and Town Superintendents, and particularly the former. In the mean time we are anxious to present our readers with a few extracts from the admirable synopsis of the Washington County Superintendent, as a favorable

specimen of the salutary change which has already been effected in this respect:

"When I first entered upon the discharge of the duties of my office as county superintendent, some two years ago last February, I entered upon the duties of a thankless office, and upon an employment, against which there were then strong and bitter prejudices! The common school system had just been revised. A new officer, heretofore unknown to the laws, had been created: A new system of supervision, never, in any form, a favorite with the people, had been instituted; and that too, without having been clamorously called for by the great mass; and hence, the whole movement was looked upon with a jealous eye; the new officer regarded as a pensioned agent, settled upon the people, 'to eat out their substance,' and his duties as involving an unwarrantable and meddling interference with the private affairs of the 'sovereign people!'"

"The bitter spirit of party and of faction, which knows nothing too sacred or too hallowed to pervert to party use, not content to leave the battle to the prejudices of ignorance and cupidity, had been invoked, and readily joined in the strife; so that for a time, destruction seemed the inevitable consequence. But when a democratic Legislature had the high moral courage to rise above party considerations, and not only to sanction, but to labor to perfect what their political opponents had commenced, the bitterest foe was disarmed of his most powerful weapon; a truce was immediately sounded; and the consequent cessation of hostilities which followed, gave a most favorable opportunity for reflection and calm consideration. That reflection was most benign and salutary in its results. For the moment this question was deprived of its political aspects, and both great parties, by their acts, fully committed to its support; nearly all, either because 'that which cannot be cured must be endured,' or from higher motives, seemed to settle down under the conviction that it might, after all, be best to give the system a fair trial!"

"That system, as I have already remarked, has now been in practical operation for about three years. Its results have thus far exceeded the most sanguine expectations of its friends. Its policy and wisdom now now no longer doubted. Some of its bitterest opponents have now become its warmest friends. The office of county superintendent has become a popular one; so that instead of going about and begging for an incumbent, it has now more disinterested and humble applicants, than could well be supplied with places in the State."

"The tone of public sentiment has also changed, in relation to the management of their schools. In the employment of teachers the question which almost universally was, 'what is your price?' has now given place, in a very good degree, to the much more appropriate and judicious one, 'what are your qualifications?'"

"Parents now more frequently visit their schools. A deeper interest is manifested in the moral, intellectual and physical training of their children."

"School-houses are beginning to improve; school apparatus to be introduced, and the whole system of instruction to be changed. In short, we are in the midst of a great moral, intellectual and physical revolution. The tide in our educational career has set, and if we will but 'take it at its flow,' will lead on to fortune."

"But, I mainly propose to review the past condition of our common schools; to show from that review, what are some of the prominent errors which were suffered to grow up under the old system of supervision, and which, it must be admitted, are still quite too prevalent among us; the effect which the propagation of these errors has had, and the consequent destructive influences which they are still exerting upon community at large; and finally, shall attempt briefly to point out a remedy for these evils."

"That our common schools have not fully accomplished the great end of their institution, I believe is almost universally felt, and as universally admitted. But with regard to the causes which have hitherto prevented the full attainment of our hopes in this respect, there ever has been, and probably will continue to be, a great diversity of opinion. Whilst the one class have strenuously insisted that the whole fault or blame was justly attributable to the teacher; another class have strenuously urged the doctrine, that the fault was more in the general apathy and criminal indifference of the people than in any thing else. A third class, however,

who always look to 'the law and the testimony,' have imagined that they saw, or could see, an insuperable barrier in the structure and peculiar features of the common school laws; and hence they have, and still maintain, that the only remedy that can be furnished adequate to the disease in question, is new legislation!"

"Without stopping to examine the arguments pro and con upon this subject, I rather propose to myself to show that after all the primary difficulty consisted more in the false notions and false principles upon which our whole system of instruction was founded, and the consequent erroneous practice under it, than in any thing else; and that, inasmuch as both teacher and people were responsible for the maintenance and perpetuation of that system, both are perhaps equally to blame!"

"The great radical error of that system consisted in teaching written 'words' rather than developing ideas; of submitting the arbitrary representative of an image for the image itself, and in treating the memory as though it were nothing more nor less than a great receptacle, into which it was the business of the 'master' to force, with birchen arguments if necessary, a certain quantity of words, and then in calling the retention of those words in that receptacle, education. 'An idea,' says an eminent author, 'is the image of an object pointed upon the mind,' just as sight is known to be the image of an object pointed upon the retina."

"Now, as the pupil of the eye is the only avenue of visible perception; so is language the only medium of vocal thought; and the attempt to feast a blind man upon the beauties of the visible universe, or to delight him with the harmonious blending of colors, would be no more absurd than to attempt to feast and gratify the immortal thinking mind upon the mere sounds of incomprehensible or inexplicable words! And yet I appeal to the good sense of every man at all acquainted with the past history of our schools, or with the prevailing sentiment of the public upon this subject, if our school system was not founded, at least practically, upon the error that I have pointed out; and if the popular sentiment does not, among the mass, even now strongly sustain it! We need but to enter the common schools of the present day, taught upon the principles of the old system, and listen to the routine of a single day's exercise, to discover the truth of this position."

"So far, then, as the general order and arrangement of the schools was concerned, and so far as action could speak, all strongly indicated that mind had little or nothing to do with the various exercises, or that thought, the element of mind, was deeply engaged in investigating the hidden mysteries of science, or in ferreting out the surest road to knowledge. In short, a moment's observation would teach us, that, under that system, masters 'kept schools,' rather than taught them! But let us not speculate upon a subject, in proof of an assumed position, that so richly abounds in facts; I propose rather to enter the school-room: to withdraw for a moment the curtain, and present a scene with which my eyes have been but too familiar! The teacher, or rather the 'master,' with all the dignity becoming one so blest with power and authority as himself, has taken the 'chair of state,' and beside him stands, for the first time in his life, the young novice; the long black catalogue of 'skeleton shaped, bloodless and ghostly apparitions,' in the garb of twenty-six Roman letters, are presented to his astonished vision; the master's knife is soon directed to the top of the column, and in rapid succession passes from the first letter down to the last, and perhaps back again; the child repeating after his monitor in a drawing, unnatural, and often monotonous tone, A-ab, B-ab, C-ab, and so on to the end of the chapter. The child having been thus gravely introduced to the twenty-six strangers, and made to repeat over their names, is hastily dismissed and sent to his seat! How many of them, however, he is expected to form a speaking acquaintance with, at this first lesson, and from such an introduction, I have never yet learned."

"Now, it would seem to require but very little knowledge of human nature, or of children's nature at least, to teach us that a process so unnatural and so little attractive as this, could not, in the nature of things, be very interesting to the restless, buoyant spirits of a child; that it could hardly be regarded by him as a satisfactory substitute for his out-door amusements, because it is so entirely destitute of every feature in those exercises which he is wont to engage, that constitute their principal attraction. Such an exercise must, therefore, early pall upon his senses, and such uniformly was the result. Children, under this system of training, early acquired a habit of inattention; so

that while the teacher was doing out his accustomed dose of abcs, the mind, if not the eyes of the child, were wandering about or dwelling upon some object to him much more attractive than the lesson before him. This practice has been carried so far, that children have been known repeatedly to be capable of repeating the whole alphabet by rote, without being able to point out more than half a dozen letters and give them their own proper names!

"Carelessness, indifference, and often disgust have, thus early been inculcated; and the destructive influences of such habits have been soon and felt through the whole of after life. Probably more injury has been done, more bad habits formed, and more false and injurious notions imbibed, during the first two years of a child's pupilage, than in all his school days thereafter.

With reference to the existing system of county and town supervision, the superintendent observes:

"Though our present school laws may be defective in some of their details, yet after all, the system is as perfect in theory, and as salutary in practice, as well may be. A state, a county and a town superintendent, certainly forms a simple, regular, efficient and unbroken chain of intercommunication through the whole body politic, easy of access, free from embarrassment, and productive of the greatest positive good. Though in practical operation but a little over three years, it has already won for itself golden opinions; more than fulfilling the expectations of its friends, and confounding or making converts of most of its enemies. The results, therefore, in this county, thus far, lead me to believe, that notwithstanding the violent opposition which the whole system has to contend with in certain quarters, the day is not far distant, when the peculiar and distinctive features of our present school organization, shall be so enshrined in the hearts and affections of the people, that neither faction nor demagoguism will be able to shake it."

But our limits admonish us that we must refer those who desire farther to pursue the reasonings of this admirable report, to the document itself, which will be found in every district library in connection with those of the state and the other county superintendents. And while on this subject we cannot withhold the expression of our opinion that every candid and unprejudiced citizen who will take the pains to peruse this volume, and make himself acquainted with what has been actually accomplished under the auspices of the several county and town superintendents, by virtue of the existing organization, will rise from the perusal, satisfied that the clamor so assiduously brought to bear at each session of the Legislature, against this system and its practical administration, has its origin in far other motives than those which appertain to the true interests of "the people and their children."

YOUNG CHILDREN.—THE PAUPERISM OF INTemperance

We re-publish, from the Argus, these gloomy statistics of some of the lesser evils of intemperance, that their lesson may be pondered by the teachers of the six hundred thousand children now in the schools of New York. For we know no more important duty of the teacher, than the

formation of those habits which are the bulwarks of character and the safeguard of the state.

Habit is principle in action, and unless principle is confirmed by action it loses all vigor, all vitality. It may be talked about eloquently, but it directs not the hand, it aways not the heart. The great duty is to arouse every dormant principle of good, and to embody it in action, that it may gain strength by trial, and for trial. And if the teacher will reflect on his opportunity to lessen the sorrows and dangers of life, as presented in the following extract from Waterston, and then read the sad record of those evils, which to so great an extent might have been prevented by right influence in the schools,—those fountains from which flow the swelling, torbid stream of existence—he will not be surprised that we have brought together subjects in themselves so utterly repugnant as the radiant dawn of childhood, and the unimaginable wretchedness of the evening of that day to the forlorn, drunken pauper. The child—the school—the life—the drunkard—the death. And what beyond? Cannot the sequence be broken?—Ed.

LITTLE CHILDREN.

"Here is the replenishing of the world; here is a new wave of existence. From these little children will be selected the judges and statesmen of the next half century. Thus are we the creators of a world's destiny; we are moulding the elements of coming society. Every generation is called to make its own impress upon days yet to come. And by the removal of one generation and the coming forward of another, Humanity may receive perpetual renovation. The mature become fixed in their views; old prejudices fasten around them, and are riveted to their souls. New minds come, and why may not these inherit the virtues without the vices of their sires? God offers the world fresh opportunities. The gates of the past close; the gates of the future open. If wisdom and love were all that passed through, the world were indeed blessed. In children, a new Humanity holds out its hand. When will mankind bequeath to it only what is good? We take one race and score them all over with errors; then God seems, in his kindness, to say, 'HERE IS A NEW RACE; BEGIN ONCE MORE.'—R. C. Waterston.

[From the Albany Argus.]

THE PAUPERISM OF INTemperance.

It has been frequently remarked, that in a free country like the United States, where taxation bears so comparatively light upon the hand of labor, there would be no poor, if man was only taught to rule those impulses and check those appetites, the gratification of which inevitably brings upon him and his relatives, misery, disgrace and poverty.

This remark is made, not without cause. In looking over the late returns of the Secretary of State, embodying the special reports of the superintendents of the county poor, under the act of March 1843, which directed them to make returns of the causes of the pauperism within

their respective counties, we find facts of the first interest to those who would seek to stay the increasing tide of pauperism. These tables will surprise even those who have for years traced the fell progress of the Moloch of Intemperance.

In these special reports, the causes of pauperism were specified in only 13,636 cases. Of this number, the following is the classification of the several causes:

Of the number of persons who were reduced to pauperism by intemperance, there were:

Males, 4,312
Females, 2,123

Total, 6,435

Of persons becoming paupers by debauchery, there were:

Males, 142
Females, 516

Total, 658

Of persons becoming paupers by idleness, there were:

Males, 261
Females, 122

Total, 383

Of persons becoming paupers by idiocy, there were:

Males, 205
Females, 191

Total, 396

Of persons becoming paupers by lunacy, there were:

Males, 440
Females, 354

Total, 794

Of persons becoming paupers by blindness, there were:

Males, 152
Females, 44

Total, 196

Of persons becoming paupers by sickness, there were:

Males, 2,029
Females, 1,512

Total, 3,541

Of persons becoming paupers by decrepitude, there were:

Males, 506
Females, 109

Total, 615

Of persons becoming paupers by old age, there were:

Males, 352
Females, 266

Total, 618

Grand total of pauperism for specified causes, 13,636

These authentic tables are deserving of more than a passing scrutiny. The number of regular paupers from intemperance is 6435—or 47 per cent of the whole. The number from debauch-

ery is 658—or about 5 per cent. Combining these two classes of persons reduced to pauperism by kin vices, we have 7093 out of 13,636—or about 52 per cent—that is, more than one-half of all the pauperism in the state arises from intemperance and debauchery!!

If the same returns could be extended to every case of pauperism—from the present data, it is not improbable to suppose that a like proportion would still exist. Applying this principle, let us see what will be the result.

In 1843, the whole expense of paupers relieved by public charity in the state of New-York, was \$533,667.77.

As the above facts have shown that intemperance and debauchery constitute 52 per cent of the pauperism, it is clear that for these two vices the people have paid in the year 1843, \$270,000.

The annual tax levied to support the victims of intemperance, seems also to be increasing with the growing population. Cannot this flood-gate of expenditure be arrested? Will not tax payers unite in a vigorous effort to reduce their taxes, which must be the inevitable consequence of the thorough and final triumph of the temperance reformation? These are the pecuniary results; but the moral and social results would be infinitely higher and nobler. The true glory of the temperance cause is, that "it brings gladness to eyes which sail with wakefulness and tears, and ache for the dark house and the long sleep."

For the District School Journal.

ORTHOGRAPHY.

MR DWIGHT: Allow me through the columns of the Journal, to say a few words upon ORTHOGRAPHY. It is the most important branch of Education; and yet, I am sorry to say it is the most neglected. Within the past year I have visited many schools in this and the adjoining counties; and in about one third of the number no attention is paid to Orthography. The Teachers in the remaining two-thirds, seemed to appreciate it, and yet, although they try to teach it, not the acquirement of a single practical principle, is the result of so doing. The ideas intended to be conveyed by the teacher, for by the use of the book, to the pupil, are all erroneous. The pupil begins with the consonants, and commits to memory what is said of them and of the vowels, in the "fore part" of the Spelling-Book. He recites the same; and if he does it without "missing," his knowledge of Orthography is pronounced complete. He then is, with his teacher, ready, and as he presumes, prepared to testify to the importance and the excellency of this great branch of study. But what scholar, after committing to memory or "learning by heart," the "fore part" of any spelling-book, can candidly say that by it he does in reality better understand the "nature and power of letters and just method of spelling words?" I have good reasons to believe that no one can. I well remember the time when I could recite every sentence upon Orthography in the "fore part" of Cobb's Spelling-Book; but the importance or advantage of so doing, I was not able to illustrate. The fact is, that but few pupils in Orthography understand what they are learning. I do wish, however, that one thing, if no more, could be well understood; and that is, that the daily lesson

soms of ALL scholars in the "fore part" of the spelling-book, are as false as they are tedious. Convince them of that fact, and perhaps some good may be derived from so learning many absurdities.

Although I may by some be considered rather enthusiastic, yet the following facts will, I trust, be sufficient to convince any one, that the above declarations are no more nor less than true.

We are told in *Sanders' Spelling-Book*, that the letter *b* has one proper sound as in *bind*. Now that the "proper sound of *b* is "be," is not denied; then *b* with its proper sound, (saying nothing of the other consonants composing the word,) would make *bind* stand for *be-ind*; "but," for *be-ut*; "bite," for *be-i'e*; "broke," for *be-roke*; "bin," for *be-in*, &c. The consistency and beauty may again be seen by giving to all the consonants in the following sentence, when reading it their "proper" sounds: A-en o-e-l-de em a-en e-f-on-en-de a-ar-w-de e-be-oy ap-o-n-o-en e-o-f-itch-i-e-s to a-r-ee-es, e-t-e-a-el-ing a-pe-e-le-es: generally, but not very "naturally," read thus: "An old man found a rade boy upon one of his apple trees, stealing apples."

I believe the sound of no consonant is heard in a word, as the sound of the consonant is spoken by the a-be-ce-darian. Of what use to us then, are our consonants, with their present Alphabetical or "proper" sounds? We might just as well, or with as much propriety, call them other names; for the pupil is taught to call them by one name when he learns them, and by another when he puts them together into words.

I-o-h-n was formerly pronounced John; I-o-s-h-v-a, Joshua. The *r* was called "peak-ed u;" but with how much propriety, I can tell as well (and no better) than I could the propriety of calling our present consonants in theory, one thing, and in practice another. In my next, I hope I shall be able to give what I think is the true System of teaching Orthography to children; and when I say "children," I mean a-be-ce-darians, as well as those who can spell and read.

DAVID PARSONS.

Public School, No. 5, Syracuse.

A CONTRAST.

Mr. DWIGHT—

Dear Sir—It is not a little gratifying to notice the happy change that has been wrought in our common school system during the last few years—to mark the striking contrast between its present condition and what it was in my school-boy days, when the course of training, with some few honorable exceptions I am happy to say, was calculated to produce disgust in the mind of the young pupil to every thing connected with the school-room—to blunt the perceptions of the understanding—to stifle the aspirations of the young and promising genius, and in short to prevent effectually the development of all that is valuable in the human character.

Perhaps some may think I am exaggerating, but I appeal to the past experience of every observer if what I have asserted is not true: it coincides, at least, with my own. I would make the inquiry if the manner of teaching Arithmetic according to Daboll's system was not calculated to create in the mind of the pupil

an unconquerable dislike for the study of mathematical science, the author having treated the subject as if the learner were actually incapable of comprehending the reasons for the rules he had laid down; and the old teachers had but little difficulty in persuading the tyro that he was thus incapable of entering into the scientific part of Arithmetic; and so it has been with other branches taught in our schools to a greater or less degree.

We now have text-books available to be placed in the hands of the young pupils, well calculated to draw out the latent powers of the juvenile mind—to expand the understanding—teachers qualified to explain whatever may be obscure or unintelligible; the beauties of science are disclosed and made attractive—happy associations are formed in the school-room, and in short, the great obstructions to the onward march of popular education have been measurably removed, and the common school is beginning to take its place among the other institutions of the land—to supersede those select and private establishments which have so long retarded its progress, and to secure the patronage and influence of the more wealthy and intelligent part of community.

Teaching is becoming an honorable profession—the talent of the country is embarking in it, and we may confidently expect that the rising generation will become the enlightened and intelligent supporters of our free, civil and religious institutions, and an honor to their revolutionary ancestry.

And whence this great change? Every one will see upon a moment's reflection that it must be dated from the commencement of the present efficient system of county and town supervision—the diffusion of intelligence among all classes through the medium of the district libraries—the columns of the excellent *School Journal*, and other valuable auxiliaries.

Popular education is the hope of our republic. Its friends have but to continue their efforts in this noble enterprise—to launch out farther and still farther in this great ocean of expansive benevolence, and they will ere long witness the consummation of their highest hopes and most ardent aspirations.

There is much that remains to be done. Notwithstanding all the light that has been thrown upon the subject, there are not a few individuals who still adhere with great tenacity to the antiquated notions of their venerated grand-parents and think forsooth that because things were thus and so in days of yore, they ought to be so at the present time.

Let the old pioneers regard the present as the incipient stages of reformation in this great department of civilization and refinement, and make our common school system indeed worthy of the Empire State.

DANIEL B. ROSS.

Canadice.

CHILDREN IN THE SANDWICH ISLANDS.

Or that memorable change of the inhabitants of the Sandwich Islands from thick darkness to marvellous light—among the agents were children and youth. The first fruits of their know-

ledge of divine things were the conviction and edification of others older than themselves. The history of these islands eminently illustrates the docility of the young, and the direct benefits to their seniors which flow from their emancipation from error.

After intelligence of the gospel was proclaimed in one of the Sandwich Islands, a priest of the country assured his hearers that should they forsake their ancient worship there would be no more rain and fruitful seasons;—their offended deity would thus punish them for their desertion. A youth named Joseph Banks—after Sir Joseph Banks, who had accompanied Captain Cook to the islands in 1778—had made voyages as a sailor both to England and the United States, and being a shrewd observer, heard with contempt the declaration of the priest, and one day undertook to ridicule the superstitions of the country in his presence. He declared that the people of England and America did not worship stupid blocks of wood and stone, but one God only, who was not to be seen himself, though he saw, and heard, and knew every thing in the world. "In England and America," said Joseph, "there are no idols, but there is plenty of rain, and fine crops too! In Tahiti and Huahine they have destroyed the idols, and worship the God of white men, yet there the rain falls, and fruits grow abundantly as ever. Why," he continued, "should not rain fall, and the ground produce food here, as well as elsewhere, when these senseless things are done away with?" The priest was confounded, and those who heard the youth's reasoning went away convinced of its truth.

It was asserted by Mr. Bennet, who visited these islands in 1821, that the eagerness for instruction among the natives was so great, that all the little boys were daily, during their play hours, in requisition as masters. Three chiefs, men of lofty stature, came early one morning to obtain a *kamu*, or teacher. They could engage none but a child, six years of age, lisping over its spelling book. Finding, however, that he could tell his letters, and repeat his *ba*, *be*, *bi*, *bo*, *bu*, one of them caught him up by the arm, mounted the little fellow upon his own broad shoulder, and carried him off in triumph, exclaiming, "This shall be my *kamu*!"

The children themselves took great delight in reciting their lessons to the older folks, and helping their fathers and mothers to say their A, B, C. Now those children have grown to be men and women, and, being better taught than their parents were, have no need to take lessons from their children. "It was," says Mr. Bennet in his journal, "beautiful to behold one of these little ones standing up among a ring of grown people, with the eyes of all waiting upon him, earnestly hearkening to his words, and repeating them from his lips, that they might impress both the sounds and their import on their memory. Nor was the implicit confidence with which they received these instructions, delivered with the ingenious gracefulness of boyhood in its prime, the least interesting circumstance of this 'new thing on earth.' Did not our Saviour set a child in the midst of his disciples to teach them how they must receive the kingdom of Heaven?"

Another affecting instance is given in Tjerman and Bennet's journal of the happy consequence

of initiating children in the faith of the gospel. "A little boy who was accustomed to wait on the missionaries, carried home to his father, who was blind, intelligence of what he had seen or heard, from time to time, in their company. The father was deeply touched by these communications; they set him to thinking; he soon abjured his old heathenism, and became a sincere Christian. He loved to hear of Christ, and prayed for those who believed not on him.

The king hearing of his faith, sent for the poor blind man, and inquired of him concerning his religion; he was able to give such an account of it as showed his sincerity in renouncing idols. One good effect of this religion upon the blind man was that it made him cleanly and decent. The islanders, in their heathen condition, were in the habit of devouring dog's flesh, live insects and other offensive things, but from the time that the blind man received the Christian doctrine from his intelligent little boy, he refused this disgusting food. A man who lived under the same roof continued his own filthy feeding, and provoked to perceive the abstinence of the blind man and his son, complained to the king that they would not eat like others, demanding that they should be punished, and compelled to do as other people did. "The man is right," answered Riho-riho—that was the king's name—"I will not suffer him to be harmed. I intend soon to learn the new way myself, and to leave off bad ways, and then you must do the same."

It is well known that the king was as good as his word, and that his successor and his subjects are now enjoying the benefits of a good education and a true religion.

New-York.

E. R.

THE IMPORTANCE OF OUR COMMON SCHOOLS.

BY S. J. MAY.

Formerly Teacher of the Lexington Normal School, now residing at Syracuse.

Whether we realize it or not, the most important trust we have to commit to others, is the care of our children,—the most momentous of all our social concerns is the education of our children. Who, that has any forecast, can look upon the rising generation, without heartfelt solicitude? Out of these infants and joyous youth are to arise the wise and good men and women, that shall bless,—and the ignorant and vicious men and women, that shall curse the coming age. Can any one be indifferent whether they shall turn out to be of the one class or of the other? Because a few years will intervene before their characters shall be unfolded—because the change from infancy to manhood will be gradual, let it never, for a moment, be forgotten, that a momentous change is coming to all children that live. In every infant there are the rudiments of a man.

When we look at a flower—see its calix filled with petals of exquisite form, of the most delicate texture, of diverse colors so rich and nicely blended that no art can equal them,—and withal perpetually diffusing a delicious perfume, we can hardly believe that all this variety of charms was evolved from a little seed, not bigger than the head of a pin.

When we contemplate a sturdy oak, that has for a hundred years defied the blasts of winter,

—has spread wide around its sheltering limbs, and has seemed to grow only more hardy the more it has been pelted by the storms, we find it difficult to persuade ourselves that the essence, the elements of all this body and strength, were once concealed in an acorn. Yet such are the facts of the vegetable world. Nor are they half so curious and wonderful as the facts which are disclosed in the history of the human mind and heart.

Here is a man, now master of twenty languages, who can converse in their own tongues with persons of as many different nations,—whose only utterance thirty years ago, was very much like, and not any more articulate than the bleating of a lamb. Or, it may be, that he, who could then send forth only a wailing cry, is now overwhelming the crowded forum, or swaying the Congress of the nation by his eloquence, fraught with surpassing wisdom.

There is another, who can conceive the structure, and direct the building of the mighty ship that shall bear an embattled host around the world; or the man, who can devise the plan of a magnificent temple, and guide the construction of every part, until it shall present to the eye of the beholder a perfect whole, glowing with the unspeakable beauty of symmetrical form. And here is a third, who has comprehended the structure of the solar system. He has ascertained the sizes of the planets, and at what precise moments they shall severally complete their circuits. He has even weighed the sun,—measured the distances of some of the fixed stars,—and foretold the very hour, "when the dread comet," after an absence of centuries, "shall to the forehead of our evening sky return." These men are the same beings, who, thirty years ago, were pining infants, scarcely equal in their intelligence to kittens of a week old.

There, too, is a man who sways the destiny of nations. His empire embraces half the earth, and throughout his wide domains his will is law. At his command, hundreds of thousands rush to arms, the pliant subjects of his insatiable ambition, ready to pour out their blood like water at his bidding. He arranges them as he pleases, to execute his purpose. He directs their movements, as if they were the creatures of his hand. He plunges them into battle, and wades to conquest over their dead and mangled bodies. That man, the despotic power of whose mind over-awes the world, was once a feeble babe, who had neither the disposition nor the strength to harm a fly.

On the other hand, there is one who now evinces unconquerable energy, and the spirit of willing self-sacrifice in works of benevolence. No toil seems to overbear his strength. No discouragement impairs his resolution. No dangers disarm his fortitude. He will penetrate into the most loathsome haunts of poverty or vice, that he may relieve the wretched, and reclaim the abandoned. He will traverse continents, and expose himself to the capricious cruelty of barbarous men, that he may bear to them the glad tidings of salvation. Or, he will calmly face the scorn and rage of the civilized world, in opposition to the wrong, however sanctioned by custom or hallowed by time; or march firmly to the stake, in maintenance of the true and the right. This man, a few years ago, might have been

seen crying for a sugar-plum, or quarreling with his little sister for a two-penny toy.

And who are they that are infesting society with their daring crimes—scattering about them "firebrands, arrows and death," boldly setting at defiance the laws of man and of God? Are they not the same beings that a few years ago were children, who, could they have conceived of such deeds of darkness as they now perpetrate without compunction, would have shrunk from them instinctively with horror?

These surely are prodigious changes, greater far than any exhibited in the vegetable world. And are they not changes of infinitely greater moment? The growth of a mighty tree from a small seed may be matter for wonder—for admiration; but the development of a being, capable of such tremendous agencies for good or for evil, should be with us all a matter of the deepest concern. Strange—passing strange, that it is not so! Go through the community and you shall find hundreds ready to adopt the best plans for the culture of vegetables, or fruit trees, where you will find one who is watching with due care over the growth of his immortal child.

MASSACHUSETTS.

THE NORMAL SCHOOL CELEBRATION AT WEST NEWTON.

On the 12th of August last, the former pupils of the Normal School at West Newton, (formerly of Lexington,) met together by appointment to celebrate as a festival the close of the sixth year since the establishment of the school. It was very pleasant to see this assemblage of happy faces, to hear their affectionate greetings for each other, and for their beloved and respected teacher.

These young ladies came from every part of the State, not a few directly from their respective fields of labor. A brighter and more intelligent looking company of young women can rarely be seen. The teacher, Mr. Pierce, must have enjoyed himself not a little in looking again upon so many countenances, in which he doubtless first waked up that expression which so strikingly characterized them all. And not only had he waked up the slumbering intellectual powers of many of the pupils, but he had also breathed into them the breath of a moral life, which, and to say, is not always inspired by the schools of youth.

Many are the temptations, resulting from inferior teaching, which induce pupils to be satisfied with superficial acquirements, and which lead them to gloss over their deficiencies. But Mr. Pierce has another standard of school morals. One must sit in his school-room for days together and listen to his code of morals, as brought out by special occasions during the common routine of lessons, before the process can actually be seen, by which he makes the most bashful come forward to confess the depths of her ignorance, and the most vain crucify her own love of approbation, by asking humble, elementary questions.

Such are the noblest fruits of this excellent teacher's instructions for no intellectual advancement that can be made, is equal in value to the conscientious use of every faculty. He would end into every school a moral power that shall exorcise all the subtleties of corrupted childhood—corrupted alas! how often in the very school-room itself, where vanity and base emulation are so frequently made the motive powers! No one can be well acquainted with many of

our school-rooms, and see the petty trickeries and jealousies which children bring into them, without longing for the day when these young beings shall be consigned to the care only of such high-principled teachers as have well considered beforehand the momentous work they have undertaken. But to return to the Newton fete. The exercises of the day consisted in an address of welcome, elegantly written and appropriately delivered, by one of the assistant teachers, to the former and present members of the school; an address, also, from the Secretary of the Board of Education; in songs, and a few extempore speeches from gentlemen guests. The addresses were given in the spacious hall of the fine building, towards the purchase of which, the Hon. Josiah Quincy, Jr. gave the sum of fifteen hundred dollars; the collation and friendly speeches were in a beautiful grove on the hill behind it.

The young ladies were mostly dressed in white, and their heads were tastefully garlanded with evergreens and flowers. The hall had been beautifully decorated by their hands, for the occasion, with green wreaths and branches interspersed with mottoes and fine sentiments.

We subjoin the following original ode, after the singing of which, the happy party separated. We select the "Farewell" song, on account of its affectionate allusions to the fatherly teacher of the school.

Again we've met with hearts as warm,
As when in early Normal days,
We trod the hall at Lexington,
And sung in glee our Normal lays,—
Or wandered o'er that hallowed ground
Where first our country's freedom woke,
Where those few brave true-hearted men
First broke the tyrant's galling yoke.

We'll not that fumbler hall forget,
Though now in fairer courts we stand,
For still we hear the same kind voice,
And see the same directing hand;
That led our willing feet along,
To tread the paths of truth and right,
And guided well our youthful mind's
By wisdom's clear and holy light.

Deal gently, Time! and let thy touch
Fall lightly on his reverend brow;
Oh, spare him, (we have loved him well,)
Oh, spare him to us, e'en as now;
And bring no weight of added cares,
Upon his sinking frame to press;—
Just touch him with thy shadowy wing,
And be that touch all gentleness.

But time, who hurries us along,
Nor will for our entreaties stay,
Still runs his course, and brings the end
Of this most happy Normal day.
Yet oft as years shall o'er us roll,
And throw their snow upon the head,
As near and nearer draws the hour
When all our joyous hopes are fled;

Then, still within our hearts shall rise
The happy hours together passed;
We'll live them o'er and o'er again
In memory's faithful mirror glassed.
Sisters, we now must say "Farewell!"
Yet still within our hearts, one spot
Sacred to you, shall be preserved.—
Oh, never shall you be forgot!

Massachusetts Common School Journal.

SEATS WITHOUT BACKS.

[Extracts from the Report of the Primary School Committee, to the Board of Trustees of the Public School Society of New-York.]

That there is a connection between the modern school education of females, and spinal injury, is now as well established as that impure air in school-rooms is hurtful to the scholars—and rests on proof of a similar kind, viz: on the accumulated observation and experience of medical men and others, in all countries where education is zealously encouraged. One or two of the prominent truths thus established, may here be mentioned.

1st. It is a matter of notoriety to the medical profession, that until about 30 or 40 years ago, spinal curvatures were very little known. It is only since "the schoolmaster has got abroad"—only since so great and universal an impulse has been given to education, that these cases have become sufficiently numerous to attract the particular attention of medical men. There is now to be found a distinct class of practitioners, and of mechanists, who live and thrive by the treatment of spinal injuries.

2d. A large proportion of these cases can be distinctly traced to causes connected with school education. Among the illiterate in all countries, these injuries are scarcely known. They occur most frequently in schools where females are much confined to a sitting posture, with but a scanty allowance of those robust and active exercises which impart power to the muscular system, and invigorate the general health.

It should be here explained, that the trunk of the body is sustained in its erect position, solely by the action of muscles. Young and growing females who are but feebly endowed with muscular strength, experience such a sense of weariness in sitting upright, as to be induced from necessity to drop the body into a variety of curvatures, and one particular curve becoming habitual, and long persisted in, finally ends in permanent deformity. The influence of exercise in preventing the evil, is precisely that which it has on the arm of a blacksmith. It augments the bulk, and redoubles the power of the muscles, and gives greater firmness and security to the joints.

3d. In all large cities, there are many children who from infancy are strongly predisposed to these affections, owing to a constitutional feebleness of muscle, or an unhealthy condition of the bones or joints. These require every precaution during the course of their education, to prevent deformity.

If the foregoing remarks be brought home to our own schools, the important question will suggest itself,—*What are the causes which are known to produce spinal injuries, an existence in our schools?* That is to say, do we find these those postures, those curved and oblique attitudes of sitting, which, by becoming habitual, are apt sooner or later to end in permanent deformity? And do our females partake, in sufficient amount, of those invigorating exercises which are so indispensable a means of counteracting a tendency to these affections? The committee are of opinion, that we cannot claim for our schools an immunity from either of the injurious causes here referred to. In regard to *posture*, the schools will speak for themselves. And as to *exercise*, the committee would only express their belief, that the girls under our care are worse off than the girls in boarding schools, where exercise is compulsory, and provision is made especially for it, and where its importance is getting to be understood and appreciated. But we have no control over the habits of our children, beyond the precincts of the school-house—and they belong to those classes of the community who are the last people in the world to bestow a thought on the influence of exercise on the health of the human body.

Now comes an important question: a question which, by the resolution of the board, it was made the especial duty of the committee to reply to, viz: *Supposing the females attending our schools to be liable to spinal injuries, are these injuries owing to the use of seats without backs?* The answer must be, that they are instrumental in causing them just so far as they place the scholar under the necessity of seeking relief in the crooked and unhealthy attitudes into which she throws her body. Another question of similar import, is this: *Would seats with back-supports, tend to prevent these injuries?* A similar answer must be given. Such seats would act as a preventive, just in proportion as they removed the temptation and the necessity for indulging in injurious flexures of the body. When we see, as we often may, a girl of rapid growth, of yielding

joints, and of feeble muscles, propping the weight of her body on her elbows, or, by way of change, bringing her sides alternately to rest on the desk before her, can we doubt for a moment, that with a back-support, she would run less risk of injury to her figure? And in regard to those children, before alluded to, as having a natural predisposition to spinal distortions, seats of this kind would be indispensable to their safety.

Undoubtedly, no means of security against spinal injuries can be wholly depended on, which do not include a proper amount of muscular action. But if the females who come to our schools suffer privation in this respect at home, the obligation becomes the greater, on our part, to furnish them with seats best suited to secure them against the threatened evil.

TEACHERS' INSTITUTES.

BROOME COUNTY.

The fall session of the Broome County Teachers' Institute will commence on Wednesday, the 1st of October next, at the brick school-house in district No. 1, Binghamton. A. D. Wright, Esq., of Verona, (author of "Analytical Orthography") and Mrs. Emma Willard, the late popular Principal of Troy Female Seminary, will assist in conducting the Institute, aided by most of the local board who took part last year. Professor Davies, L. L. D., of West Point, will also be present, if possible.

A course of lectures on Natural Science, as applied to Agriculture and the Arts, will be given by Dr. N. S. Davis, of Binghamton; and also several lectures on Natural Philosophy, by E. M. Rollo, A. B., Principal of Binghamton Academy.

J. T. BRODT, Co. Sup't.

Windsor, Sept. 15, 1845.

GENESEE.

DARIEN, August 24, 1845.

DEAR SIR—A Teachers' Institute will be opened at Alexander village, at the Seminary, on Monday, the 29th of September next, to continue two weeks, under the joint supervision of David Nay, county superintendent, and Norman F. Wright, A. M., principal of the Genesee and Wyoming Seminary. On Monday, the 13th of October next, another Institute will be opened at Caryville, which will also continue two weeks under the supervision of David Nay and Werden Reynolds, A. M. principal of the Cary Collegiate Seminary. The Rev. Ebenezer Child will be in attendance as an instructor of elocution. To increase the interest of the Institutes, lecturers will be obtained, some of them from abroad, who will occupy the evenings in addressing the students and citizens generally, on subjects relating to educational improvement. The opportunities thus afforded to the teachers, who may be in attendance, will be of incalculable value not only to them, but to the schools that may hereafter be placed under their charge. Teachers, therefore, male and female, wishing to avail themselves of recent improvements in the art of teaching, are earnestly solicited to attend. Terms of tuition for two weeks \$1.50. Board can be obtained at public houses or in private families, at moderate prices, or if teachers choose, they can obtain rooms and furnish board for themselves.

D. NAY,
County Sup't.

GREENE.

The annual meeting of the Greene Co. Common School Association, will be held on the 15th October inst., at Cairo.

OSWEGO.

(For the Journal.)

A Teachers' Institute will be held in the Academy rooms, at Mexico, Oswego co., commencing on the 13th day of October inst., and will continue two weeks. Mr. S. R. Sweet, of Rome, is engaged as Principal, and from present indications, we have every reason to believe there will be a general attendance of the teachers of the county. Arrangements have been made to raise, by voluntary contributions, sufficient to cover the expenses of tuition, &c. Teachers who attend, will be taxed for nothing except board, and arrangements will be made to obtain this at the cheapest possible rate. The teachers will do well to provide themselves with a testament, slate, a blank book for taking notes, and stationery for practising composition. Text-books will be furnished by the Principal. It is desirable, also, that every member should be supplied with a copy of Colburn's Mental Arithmetic, as particular pains will be taken to give instruction in this useful branch of science. Several scientific gentlemen from abroad are expected to be present and address the association. We are confident of having a happy, an interesting, and a profitable time, and trust that no teacher in Oswego county will willingly absent himself from the meeting. Come one, come all,

O. W. RANDALL,
J. B. PARK, } Ex. Com.
ALEX. WHALEY, }

WAYNE.

The Wayne County Teachers' Institute will open at the Methodist Church in Lyons, on the 22d inst., at 10 o'clock A. M., and continue two weeks in session, under the direction of SAMUEL COLE, Esq., county superintendent, and Prof. N. BRITTAN, Principal of the Lyons Union School, as Principals, assisted by Miss HAWCE and Mr. E. D. GRANGER, of the Normal School, Albany, and Miss D. ROGERS and Mr. FULTON, teacher of penmanship of the Union School, Lyons.

There will be sessions during the day and evening.

The course of instruction will embrace a general review of the branches taught in common schools—the best modes of organizing and conducting the same—different methods of teaching, &c.

Lectures on Anatomy and Physiology,—on Civil Government—and on Vocal Music, with illustrations, will be delivered before the institute.

OFFICIAL.

TO COUNTY SUPERINTENDENTS.

The several County Superintendents, in preparing their abstracts of statistical information for the present year, will comprise those of the respective summer and winter terms, upon the same sheet, with separate footings, as heretofore: it having been found impracticable to forward duplicate blanks for this purpose.

N. S. BENTON, State Sup't.